Satellite Imagery to Map and Prospect Diamonds

5251. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether statellite imagery is being used to map and prospect diamonds in the country;

(b) if so, the States where work is being done;

(c) the companies which are engaged in this work; and

(d) the result of diamonds prospecting during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Satellite Imagery and aerial photography are being used to identify prospective areas as supporting tool to locate kimberlite/lamproite bodies which normally host diamonds in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.

(c) As per information received from Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM), seven companies have been granted Prospecting Licences/Reconaissance Permits for exploration for diamond and other precious minerals in theState of Andhra Pradesh. Out of the seven companies three companies *i.e.* National Mineral Development Corporation Limited (NMDC), M/s. De-Beers and M/s. Geo Mysore Services (India) Pvt. Ltd. have proposed to use Satellite Imagery and Remote Sensing for exploration of Diamonds.

(d) The results of prospecting by these companies are yet to be received. However, during the last three years GSI has identified Kimberlite/ Lamproite pipes and plugs in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh, Gulbarga and Raichur district of Karnataka and Bargarh district of Orissa based on integration of remote sensing and aerogeophysical data followed by ground evaluation. Micro diamonds have been recovered from Tumkur district in Karnataka from stream sediments based on such studies.

Growth rate in Mining Sector

5252. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the growth rate in mining sector has been lower in April-February, 2001-02 as compared to the same months in the year 2000-01;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) As per information available with Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM), a subordinate office under Department of Mines, the growth in mining sector is higher (1.63%) during April—February, 2001-2002 as compared to the corresponding period of the year 2000-2001.

(c) In view of (a) above does not arise.

Amendment to contract labour laws pertaining to coal mining sector

5253. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee on Integrated Coal Policy has suggested amendments to the Contract Labour Laws pertaining to coal mining sector;

(b) if so, whether the recommendations have been implemented/ being implemented;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) No, Sir. The Committee on Integrated Coal Policy have not suggested amendments to the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970. However, they have made recommendations for exempting the coal industry from the notifications issued under Section 10(1) of the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 prohibiting employment of contract labour in certain categories of jobs in the coal mines. Exemption has been recommended in the following categories of jobs:

(i) Loading and unloading of coal by mechanical means.

(ii) Oberburden removal and earth cutting by mechanical means.

(iii) Underground driving of stone drifts and miscellaneous stone cutting.